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ILLUSTRIOUS MEN



D. C. HOSSACK

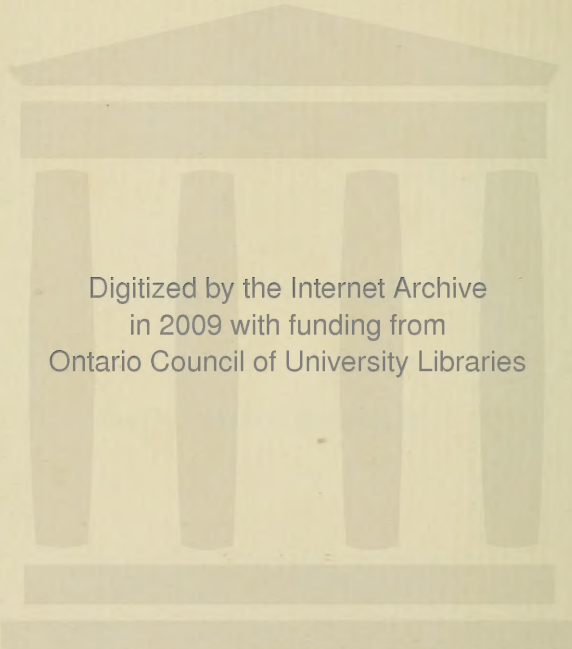
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ADDRESSES

BY

D. C. HOSSACK.

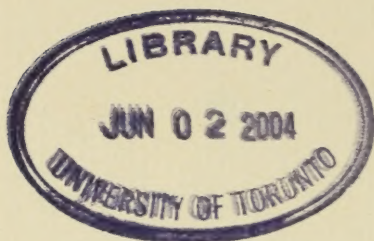


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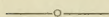
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MILTON,
THE POET AND PATRIOT.

WHEN the historian has examined the fields of the past, after time has swept by bearing upon its tide all that is light, all that is unimportant, all that has failed to make a name to live, he tells us that the impressions made upon the centuries by men who were truly great, generally occur in groups, and that a great character must be studied in comparison with his contemporaries, amid the associations of his life ; not beneath the critical glare of this nineteenth century sun, but in the shadow of the age in which he lived.

While we observe this rule to-day, let us in imagination go back two hundred and fifty years and visit that group of men, who about that time were the great actors upon the

stage of English life. Away in the county of York, Wentworth, the great, eloquent, bad Wentworth, is presiding over the council of the north; while in another part of the kingdom Laud is holding his high commission court. In the village street of Elstow there plays a little boy, who, in a score of years, will be called the Bedfordshire tinker, and in three centuries glorious John Bunyan. Down in Huntingdonshire lives that stalwart farmer, Oliver Cromwell, soon to be the ablest general of his country and the greatest ruler in the world; and in Buckinghamshire is that brave patriot, John Hampden. In the Middle Temple, poring over his ponderous law books, is Edward Hyde, destined to be Earl of Clarendon; while in Northamptonshire is the little boy, John Dryden. Seventeen times (only seventeen times) has the river Avon, when swollen by the rains of April, sung the dirge of England's greatest poet, William Shakespeare, who used to walk the banks of his loved river, whose gentle murmur fell sweet upon his childish ear, and who, in manhood as in youth was wont to

“Pore upon the brook that babbles by.”

Such are the men, with one exception, who form that great group; but where is he, the central figure—perhaps the greatest of them all? Down in Buckinghamshire, at his father's country house, lives John Milton, the poet. There, in his early manhood, for he is only twenty-five, the poet is beginning to send forth those gleams of light that bespeak a glorious genius in its dawn.

How wonderfully does verse reflect the scenes amid which it is written. Tennyson, in his early life amid the fens of Lincolnshire and Cambridge, sings of the scenes that are common there:—

“And the silvery marish flowers that throng
The desolate creeks and pools among
Were flooded over with eddy song.”

Milton, in his poems, “L’Allegro,” “Il Penseroso,” “Arcades,” “Comus,” and “Lycidas,” all written in this happy period at his father's home, caught the tints of rosy morning, shimmering moonlight, orchards thick with blossoms, and gardens gay with flowers; and, as in so many mirrors, reflected them upon us in this later age. What a

delight it must have been to Milton to walk the glades of Horton, and, as he himself sings :—

“ To hear the lark begin his flight,
And, singing, startle the dull night
From his watch-tower in the skies,
'Till the dappled dawn doth rise ;
Then to come, in spite of sorrow,
And at my window bid good-morrow,
Through the sweet-briar or the vine,
Or the twisted eglantine.”

When we trace the careers of great men, and ask ourselves what were the motives for their actions, how often we find, behind all and moving all, that one great interest, self. The nature of Milton was so noble and unselfish that he could never err in this direction. Ambitious he may have been ; ambitious we believe he was ; but it was a virtuous ambition. He had written poetry ; he felt that he was a poet ; and it was the great ambition of his life to write a poem that would be immortal. This was his guiding star, this the dream of his young life, that he hoped to make a reality ; this the vision that floated through his mind in his continental tour. It was with him in France,

with him in Italy, with him when he stood within the dungeon walls, and gazed upon the blind old Galileo punished by the Inquisition for interpreting the handwriting of God in the heavens, and, at last, when his imagination was kindled in Italy by the wealth of scenery, sculpture and music, the dream became a purpose. He would write a great epic poem, founded upon Arthur of the table round, or some other hero of ancient British days, and not upon some Italian legend, for, although Italy with her scenery and her arts had deeply impressed his mind, there came to that young poetic nature with a rush of feeling the memory of the summer glades of Horton, and the thought that he was an Englishman.

Years of misrule and injustice had been sowing in England the seeds of discord and hate amidst her sons, and when the earliest murmurs of civil war reached Milton in Italy there was an immediate strife between ambition and patriotism. Ambition pointed to the completion of his continental tour, to Sicily and Greece, and to the beginning of his epic poem. Patriotism pointed to the

white cliffs of old England, and the assistance of his struggling countrymen. In what beautiful language Milton tells us of the decision to which he came. "When I was preparing to pass over into Sicily and Greece, the melancholy intelligence which I received of civil commotions in England made me alter my purpose, for I thought it base to be travelling for amusement abroad while my fellow-citizens were fighting for liberty at home." There is a turning point in every life,

"A tide in the affairs of men,

Which taken at the flood leads on to fortune,"

and when it came to Milton well might many of his countrymen thank God that he proved true to his country in her hour of need, and well may we be glad that he made that happy choice, as, in this later day, we trace the good which Milton did down through two centuries and a half, to the freedom of our institutions and the wisdom of our laws. When we consider how much Milton at this time surrendered for his country, how young he was, how hopeful, how ambitious, may we not conclude that this decision was the greatest action of his life, greater than the

writing of his early poems, greater than the defeat of Salmasius in debate, greater even than "Paradise Lost." It was the crowning glory of his life that he threw away ambition.

At this time the Parliament of England opposed the tyranny of the Stuarts, but the Commons, who were men of action in the field, were weak in the realm of letters. When, however, they who had espoused the cause of the Parliament looked abroad for a champion to justify to all the world the part which they had acted in the civil strife, they found a worthy defender in John Milton. The "Tenure of Kings and Magistrates," arguing the lawfulness of the execution of Charles Stuart, was soon given to the world. The deed had been committed, and none knew better than Milton the wisdom of defending it, since, after such an outburst of public feeling, a reaction might follow, which would sweep away all that had been won from the grasp of tyranny.

In the same year in which Milton was made foreign secretary appeared the "Royal Defence of Charles the First," by Salmasius, one of the finest scholars of Europe. Al-

though Milton was in feeble health, and was threatened with the complete loss of eyesight, the sight of one eye being already gone, the feeling of patriotism was so strong within him, that forgetting himself, and remembering only his country, he replied to Salmasius, whom he completely discomfited, in one of his most famous prose works, "The Defence of the People of England." Once more in his "Second Defence of the People of England" he labored in behalf of his countrymen, to whom he paid that fine tribute, "No illusions of glory, no extravagant emulation of the ancients influenced them with a thirst for idle liberty, but the rectitude of their lives, and the sobriety of their habits, taught them the only true and safe road to the rights of conscience."

When the Stuart line was restored these two works were publicly burned, and Milton was forced to live in obscurity—an obscurity from which the genius of the blind poet flashed more brilliantly than at any previous part of his career, for "Paradise Lost" was given to the world. Six years later appeared "Paradise Regained" and "Sampson Agonistes";

but "Paradise Lost" is undoubtedly the finest production of Milton's genius.

Following through the poem in the footsteps of the master mind, the light of his genius falling upon us as we go, we see the burning lake, the council of the fallen spirits, Adam's vision of the future, and, most terrible though grandest conception of all, the arch-fiend himself. What dauntless courage, what strength of will, what defiance to all pain, defeat, despair are expressed in the fallen spirit's words :

"What though the field be lost ?
All is not lost ; the unconquerable will,
And study of revenge, immortal hate,
And courage never to submit or yield,
And what is else not to be overcome ;
'That glory never shall His wrath or might
Extort from me."

Milton does not draw his characters distinctly ; they are vague and misty ; and it is for this reason that they find an abiding place in every mind, although in no two minds are they alike. He paints a word-picture that has only a few distinct touches—here and there a piece of blue sky seen through the

mist—a picture that is dim, and by its very dimness rendered more effective. His description of the king of terrors is more awful, after groping amid clouds of mist, to find only three points on which the mind can rest—the color, the dreadful dart, the likeness of a kingly crown.

“The other shape,

If shape it might be called, that shape had none,
Distinguishable in member, joint or limb,
Or substance might be called that shadow seemed,
For each seemed either ; black it stood as night,
Fierce as ten furies, terrible as hell,
And shook a dreadful dart ; what seemed his head,
The likeness of a kingly crown had on.”

We know not how bright a future Milton pictured for his great work, “Paradise Lost”; but scarcely could he have dared to hope that it would leave behind it that brilliant track in travelling through time, and have that mighty influence which, from this vantage ground of a later century, we can discern. How wonderful has been the history of “Paradise Lost” since first it was given to the world, and taken up by grave old Puritans whose rough hands turned its earliest pages that they might read,

“Of man’s first disobedience and the fruit
Of that forbidden tree, whose mortal taste
Brought death into the world, and all our woe,
With loss of Eden ;”

and who dare say that, as they thus read, there coursed not down many a furrowed cheek, to fall upon these opening words, tears that were awakened by the thought of Milton and of Milton’s friend, the great Oliver, by whose side they had charged at Naseby and Dunbar, and had spent no prouder moment in their lives than when standing at the side of the great general, in the palmy days of the Commonwealth, when at his nod cavaliers trembled, and at the stamp of his foot the Long Parliament melted away? Since then how wonderful the history of “Paradise Lost”! How many a weary wanderer has been turned to newer and to better things by the glorious words of this inimitable poem! How many a deep philosopher has left his barren thought to revel in the fruitful fancy of “Paradise Lost”! How many a true poet has retired discouraged from the struggle for success to read “Para-

dise Lost " and encouraged to startle the world with

" Things unattempted yet in prose or rhyme ! "

How many a boy has read the rolling periods of " Paradise Lost," destined to bear noble fruit in the burning eloquence of manhood. Who can deny that many a weary worker in the vineyard of the Lord has learned, for the first time, from the glorious truths of this noble poem, how he might

" Assert eternal Providence,

And justify the ways of God to men " ?

Such has been the history of " Paradise Lost." It has found an entrance into the castle of the great and the mansion of the wealthy ; in all time, for " Paradise Lost," the dust has been swept from the neglected shelf in the cottage of the poor and lowly ; and in this modern age from its wells of poetic thought pour pure waters to gladden the dusty roads of life.

England is ever ready to honor her great dead. She cherishes the memory of Hampden and of Shakespeare. It is her pride that in the one she has produced an example of patriotism pure as the world has ever seen ; that in the other she possesses the greatest

poetic genius that has yet appeared among men. Hampden and Shakespeare were truly great, and worthy of all praise and imitation ; but, for the man who possessed to a great extent the finer qualities of both, our praise is well-nigh twofold. When we consider that the foreign secretary, in the time of the Commonwealth, and the writer of " Paradise " Lost " are one, our praise is turned to wonder ; and when we remember that the same lofty soul went unshaken on his way through age, poverty, domestic affliction, abuse, neglect and blindness itself, what shall we say of Milton ?

Men pity Byron and Burns, and say that had they not been fondled and, in turn, neglected by the world, the one had not become a reckless wanderer, with a curse for humanity written on the haughty curve of his lip, and the other had not fallen into penury and sin. But the world fondled Milton. For a few short years he walked in pleasant places, and then he had neglect and penury and political disappointment, and, most terrible of all, blindness itself. We pity Byron and Burns because they were weak, and their

misfortunes were their sins ; but, although the author of " Paradise Lost " had more misfortune than ever fell to the combined experience of Byron and Burns, his character was so noble, so lofty, so far beyond the characters of common men, that we cannot pity him. He was poor, his works had been publicly burned, his political hopes were blasted, and, greatest misfortune of all to one who could read more in nature than the majority of poets, he was blind. No more would he visit his old home at Horton, for the meadows in which, when a boy, he played, although still bright with flowers, no longer smiled for him. No more would he visit Cambridge, and see the college rooms, as he had seen them when a student there. Not again would he travel over Europe and feel the balmy breezes of the south, for the blue of the Italian sky had turned to utter darkness. Earth had lost its beauty, and all was gloom to Milton, for he was blind. Such were the woes that fell to the lot of Milton—woes that in the life of any other man might excite in friend and foe the deepest pity : but when we see that great


soul, that has suffered so greatly for his country, moving steadily forward in the midst of calamity, without asperity, without coldness, without even despondency, almost with cheerfulness, and in his onward march accomplishing so much, we feel that pity is unnecessary here. We may pity some great men ; we may pity men as great as Byron and Burns, but to pity Milton seems presumption. While his spirits were not high enough to make him an enthusiast, they never failed him. Fortune might change, Milton never : for through all his life he bore himself as some tall rock that bears alike the sunshine and the storm. The world might smile to-day and scowl to-morrow, but the character of Milton could never change. " Such as it was," says Macaulay, " when, on the eve of great events, he returned from his travels in the prime of health and manly beauty, loaded with literary distinctions, and glowing with patriotic hopes, such it continued to be when, after having experienced every calamity which is incident to our nature, old, poor, sightless and disgraced, he retired to his hovel to die." Macaulay continues to describe the great

poet and patriot in that noble strain that is so characteristic of his fine essay on Milton—
“We are not much in the habit of idolizing either the living or the dead. But there are a few characters which have stood the closest scrutiny and the severest tests, which have been tried in the furnace and have proved pure, which have been weighed in the balance and have not been found wanting, which have been declared sterling by the general consent of mankind, and which are visibly stamped with the image and superscription of the Most High. These great men we trust that we know how to prize ; and of these was Milton.”

When we consider the great good which Milton rendered his country and the world in the role of a patriot ; when we think of the mission of his poetry in the past, the good which it is doing in the present and the influence that it will have upon the generations that are yet to come, are we not filled with sadness at the thought that into a life that bore such noble fruit there should have crept the neglect of a cold and heartless world, and that so early for that life earth had lost its

coloring, heaven its light, and all was dark to Milton—one long night that knew no breaking, until, after twenty-one long years, there burst upon his gladdened sight the dawn of an eternal day and over all England with bated breath men whispered, Milton is dead !

WILLIAM EWART GLADSTONE.

 OF Scotch parentage, William Ewart Gladstone was born in Liverpool, where his father was engaged in business. He was educated at Eton and Oxford, graduating at the age of twenty-two. While Gladstone was still an under-graduate, there was an oratorical contest between the Senior Societies of Cambridge and Oxford, in which he engaged without distinguishing himself. Cambridge challenged Oxford to debate the question whether Shelley was not a greater poet than Byron. Young Gladstone, Mr. Manning, afterwards Cardinal Manning, and others, while supporting Oxford, were opposed by Moncton Milnes, afterwards Lord Houghton, Arthur Hallam, whom Tennyson laments in "In Memoriam," and a student of the name of Sutherland, who was then probably the

best debater of them all. In the contest Gladstone's party suffered a complete defeat. Who then would have predicted that Gladstone and not Sutherland would have been Prime Minister? But while the latter is unknown to history, the former stands in the full gaze of the world.

This is, however, only an example of the failure which many experienced in predicting Gladstone's career. Even Macaulay—a man of judgment and ability—"the only man whom England ever made a lord for the power of his pen"—utterly failed to forecast Gladstone's career when reviewing a work by Gladstone on the State in its relations to the Church, he wrote. "The author of this volume is a young man of unblemished character, and of distinguished parliamentary talents, the rising hope of those stern and unbending Tories, who follow reluctantly and mutinously a leader whose experience and eloquence are indispensable to them, but whose cautious temper and moderate opinions they abhor." Who could have then predicted that "the rising hope of those stern and unbending Tories who followed reluctantly and mutin-

ously" Sir Robert Peel would be the politician who had been laughed down in his first speech two years before? Who could have predicted that forty-three years later the man who, after sweeping Great Britain and Ireland, would defeat in a general election the real hope of the stern and unbending Tories, the man who would grapple with the Irish Land question, who would maintain the right of Britain in a successful foreign war, the great Liberal who would stand in the front rank of statesmen, living or dead, would be that very Gladstone of whom Macaulay wrote?

The Free Traders had fought many a hard battle, but at last their efforts were crowned with success, and in the House the division was in favor of Free Trade. The Government, however, still maintained its hold of office. Disraeli, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, handled his figures in such a manner that many thought he would make a good Budget if the conditions by which his party existed would permit him. His Cabinet were committed to the Country party and the farmers. When Disraeli committed himself

to the Country party he probably knew that the Peelites and Free Traders would oppose him, but as his chief support came from the Country party, he dared not neglect it, and therefore in his Budget speech he advocated the reduction of the malt duties, the increase of duties on inhabited houses, and other changes of minor importance.

Disraeli had been obliged to contend with two difficulties. He had escaped from the one and prepared to meet the other, which was the attack of the Peelites and Free Traders. The excitement on both sides was intense ; the fate of the Government would be decided that night ; little was required to turn the balance to either side. The Government would be defeated by a narrow majority, if at all.

It has been said that Disraeli could never speak so well as when influenced by despair. He was in despair that night ; despair was written in his countenance ; despair trembled in his words. His great powers of sarcasm and invective were brought into full play. We know how bitterly he attacked O'Connell, when the Irish agitator called him the

son of the impenitent thief who died on the cross. It is said that in this speech Disraeli turned full on Sir Charles Wood and leaning across the table said, "I care not to be the Right Honorable gentleman's critic, but if he has learned his business he has yet to learn that petulance is not sarcasm, and that insolence is not invective." It was two o'clock in the morning when Disraeli ceased, and scarcely had the last bitter words fallen from his lips when Gladstone rose to reply. The speech which followed was the first really great speech which Gladstone made in Parliament. Some thought that after Disraeli's speech no further impression could be made upon the House. But they were mistaken. Perhaps we can obtain no better idea of the reply than from a description by an able critic of Mr. Gladstone as a debater. "The excitement which prevails around him always infects him strongly; his pale face twitches, his magnificent voice quivers; his body swings from side to side as he pours forth argument, pleading and invective strongly intermingled. As he draws to a close something like a calm comes on the

scene, and upon both sides men listen eagerly to his words, anxious to catch each sentence of his peroration, always delivered with an artistic care, which only one other member of Parliament can equal, and seldom failing to impress the House with its beauty." About four o'clock in the morning the House divided and Disraeli was defeated by a majority of nineteen. From that night for more than a score of years these two men were opposed in debate. The rivalry of Pitt and Fox was great, but not conducted on such a grand scale as that of these two men.

In 1852, Mr. Gladstone became Chancellor of the Exchequer. That he was eminently fitted for that office we may judge from the fact that Lord Russell described his Budget speeches as containing "the ablest expositions of the true principles of finance ever delivered by a British statesman."

On the death of Lord Palmerston in the year 1865, Gladstone became leader of the Liberals in the House of Commons. In the following year a Reform Bill was introduced to the House by Gladstone, but was defeated on

account of the opposition of a section of the Ministerial party under Mr. Lowe. Disraeli having been defeated in the House in 1868, on the question of the disestablishment of the Irish Church, appealed to the country, and when the majority against him was increased, resigned. Gladstone then became Prime Minister, and remained in power until 1873.

It is in this administration of Gladstone that we find his great characteristic as a statesman. There are statesmen who legislate to remain in power. Of this class was Lord Burleigh, but not Gladstone. If there was a wrong to be resisted, Gladstone would attempt it, even should it make him unpopular with a certain party. Many measures introduced in this administration—measures which he must have considered necessary—not only gained him no support, but rendered him so unpopular that in 1874 he was defeated. Gladstone like Bright was not the man to “set his sail to every passing breeze.” This is one of the reasons, possibly, for his failure to win signal success as a party leader; but when on the floor of the House, he rose to

speak, feeling that what he was about to say was vital, there was no one who could grapple with him. It was the pride of the Liberals of Great Britain that the Prime Minister was not a statesman to pander to any class of people, nor a statesman who regulated his actions by the desires of any party clique, but a man who had taken for his motto some such sentiment as this :—

“ Onward while a wrong remains
To be conquered by the right ;
While oppression lifts a finger
To affront us by his might :
While an error clouds the reason,
Or a sorrow gnaws the heart,
Or a slave awaits his freedom,
Action is the wise man’s part.”

In 1875 Gladstone retired from public life and engaged in literary pursuits. When occasion arose, however, he left his study and set all England aflame with his eloquence. He went north and was a candidate for Mid-Lothian, where he was elected in the face of strong opposition. He was returned to power by a large majority.

It has been said that Gladstone adopted the foreign policy of Beaconsfield, but to any

one who has studied carefully the administrations of these two men, the error in this statement is apparent. Jewish in descent, Jewish in appearance, Jewish in nature, Beaconsfield was nevertheless the most thoroughly British statesman of his age. His foreign policy was arranged apparently to suit the people of Great Britain, who are subject to war fever. Gladstone was not willing to engage in war to please even a majority of the people, unless the protection of British property and the rights of his countrymen demanded it.

It is possible that Gladstone was surpassed as an orator by Bright. As a debater in the House he stood alone. He had great fluency and a voice strong, clear and vibrant. Woe to the man who dared to interrupt, for it was only adding fuel to the fire. When Gladstone spoke he was greatly in earnest ; his attention was concentrated upon his subject ; retorts burst from his lips with such fluency and vehemence as to overwhelm his hearers. An opposing gesture, or a contradictory look was sufficient to evoke a scathing reply. As a debater his readiness was one of his great

characteristics. He could speak apparently without preparation, for he was prepared for anything. It was said that Bright frequently wrote his perorations, but that Gladstone never wrote a line.

Gladstone lived a long life. His last years were given to his country. As a politician he may not have been a success ; as a statesman he may have made mistakes ; as a man of magnificent endowments, who ever strove to give his best to his generation, posterity will in her judgment be kind to him,

“ One who never turned his back, but
 Marched breast forward,
Never doubted clouds would break,
Never dreamed, though right were worsted,
 Wrong would triumph,
Held, we fall to rise, are baffled to
 Fight better,
 Sleep to wake.”

BENJAMIN DISRAELI.

SOMEWHAT more than fifty years ago, when the two great sister schools and the two great sister universities of England, contained a number of the men who would afterwards distinguish themselves in the British Parliament, there was one, attending a second-rate London school, or writing in a London law office, who, in brilliancy of career, was destined to outshine them all. He was a star of the first magnitude, yet below the horizon ; fame had stamped him for her own.

The office work, however, proving distasteful to the mind of Disraeli, (for it was indeed he) he devoted himself to literature, soon afterwards producing " Vivian Grey," The " Young Duke " soon followed, achieving for him considerable success, destined, how-

ever, to be far surpassed by that obtained by him, in the line of action in which he passed the greater part of his life.

A young author is very apt to introduce himself as a character in his first work. So it was with Disraeli; when Vivian Grey says, "Mankind is my great game," we hear the voice of Disraeli.

"Mankind is my great game;" this is the chart of his after-life; the world would be the broad stage on which he would act the great drama of his manhood's days, for it is a drama, not a comedy, not a tragedy, but a great history. Nothing would be real; all would be acting: yet in such close proximity to reality, that the world would deem it such.

He would be a champion of the people. By their influence, which was then beginning to be, and now is, one of the chief roads to political power, he would enter Parliament. Having attempted in three different places to gain a seat in Parliament and having been defeated in every place, suddenly changing his tactics, he entered Parliament under the fostering care of nobility, as a Conservative.

He had now gained that broad platform whence he would hail the world. He had dazzled his readers in the novels which he had written ; he would now proceed to dazzle the assembled Commons of Great Britain and Ireland ; but, in forgetting the difference between his library and St. Stephens, or rather thinking that what had been written in the one, might be spoken in the other, he made a great mistake.

Clothed in a rather foppish style—bottle green coat, white waistcoat glittering with a network of golden chains, and necktie of such dimensions as to completely hide his collar—he presented a rather uncouth appearance, as he proceeded to make his maiden speech.

His dress was so strange, and his speech so wild, as to draw down the mirth of the House of Commons, and especially that of the country squires. How little did those squires think, that he, the laughing-stock of to-day, would be to-morrow the breakwater that would turn away from them wave after wave of opposition. How little did they think that they would one day confide their

best interests to him, and that their confidence would turn to wonder, at the very bearing of the man, as he poured forth torrents of scathing eloquence in their behalf.

He showered forth figures of speech, attended by wild gesticulation, in such a storm as to illicit derisive cheers and laughter, against which he bore until anger flashed, for the first time, from the coal-black eyes, setting out his lividly pale countenance, when he uttered those memorable words which have since taken a place on the page of history : " I have begun several times many things, and I have often succeeded at last ; ay, sir, and though I sit down now, the time will come when you will hear me."

Thus ended Disraeli's first great attempt to gain Parliamentary distinction. He had risen to dazzle and he had been laughed to scorn ; he had done his best, and he had failed ; he had been weighed in the balance, and found wanting.

As we look back through the light of time, on that first great event in his Parliamentary career, we can scarcely help concluding that Disraeli was harshly judged. True it

is the coin contained alloy, but it was on the outside ; within, hidden as yet from human sight, there was the glitter of pure gold.

Disraeli has mounted a few steps on the ladder of fame, and is hurled down headlong ; and, now, as he rises from the dust of humiliation, we may imagine his wounded feelings stamping upon his mind that firm resolve “ I will be heard.” He receives a blow which would lay low the majority of men ; yet, how quickly does he recover himself. His is a free lance. He has broken it once in vain, in his tourney for renown ; he will wait for years if necessary, until he sees a weak point, through which he will strike home to fame.

This is a fitting place to glance back at his early career. Descended from Jewish parents, amid a conventional people, he had overcome this great disadvantage. He had received a poor school-education, another disadvantage which he had also overcome. He had gained success as an author—a success with which he does not appear to have been satisfied. He had gained a seat

in Parliament, where, in imagination, he had raised a towering castle, which now lay crumbled at his feet.

Disraeli entered Parliament in 1837. We will pass over the intervening years until 1847—years in which he spoke often, but in which he won little substantial renown.

On the 22nd of January, 1846, Parliament met. On such a night as that, when a great debate is expected, the ministerial benches, the opposition benches, the Speaker's gallery, the stranger's gallery—all are crowded. An intense excitement prevails; and, on this occasion, there was an almost equally intense curiosity. The address to the throne was moved and seconded. Now was the time for debate. The House was surprised, when Peel arose; the long-expected explanation was at last to come. Peel, forced by the Irish famine, had become a Free Trader; thus filling with resentment the minds of many of his supporters.

The work of the night seemed done, when suddenly there rose to speak a man who had been in Parliament for ten sessions and who had won little substantial renown, unless re-

peated failure is renown. It was Benjamin Disraeli. With the eye of genius he saw that the opportunity for which he had waited so long had come, and that to attack Peel was at once to deprive him of many of his followers, and to gain them for his own. The hour had come, and the man was not wanting. With that powerful sarcasm which he, perhaps more than any other man of his time possessed, he attacked Peel. He described him as a man who, having changed his political opinions, had retained his position, and betrayed the party that had put him in power.

Peel's overthrow did not immediately follow ; but a few months later he was forced to resign. From that time Disraeli became the real leader of the Tory squires.

Never, perhaps, has any other political career had such a wonderful turning-point. Before that night, there was repeated failure ; after it, one long-continued triumph.

In the three administrations of Lord Derby, Disraeli was Chancellor of the Exchequer. In 1868 he became Prime Minister for the first time, thirty-one years after he had

been laughed down in his first speech—years of toil, years of watching, years that eventually brought success.

Although the people sometime later declared against Disraeli, we must not think that they did not appreciate the many benefits he had conferred upon them as a nation. To be convinced that the people understood what a great leader, in Disraeli, had been considering their interests, we have only to look at the reception which met him, on his return from the Berlin Congress—a more enthusiastic reception than which has, perhaps never, been tendered to any statesman in modern times.

How few of those, who aspire to political fame, succeed in that arduous struggle. Disraeli possessed that force that had carried him on to success. Step by step he had risen ; the attorney's clerk, the famous novelist, the young politician, (would he stop ? not there) the Parliamentary leader, the Prime Minister. Thus, step by step, he had gained that proud eminence, whence he could now look down on the heads of those who years ago, scorned him, then lower down

on the ladder of political renown than they were.

The great prediction had been uttered in anger, nevertheless it had been fulfilled. He had begun several times many things ; truly he had succeeded at last ; they would hear him now.

Disraeli had had his defeats and his triumphs, his cloudy days and his bright days ; and now, an old man, he was about to die. Although tears welled up from the hearts of his friends, and regret filled the minds of his political foes, when that April sun rose and told England that the voice of her great statesman was forever silent, how small a number fully comprehended how bright the rose that had fallen from the chaplet of Britain's greatness,

Ages will pass away, and the name of Disraeli may be wrapped in oblivion ; but in future years men who have yet to become famous will stand aside to let him pass, as he takes his mighty march down the path of time. Benjamin Disraeli ! How much is implied in that name, eloquence, wisdom leadership, force—qualities which go a long

way to make up the character of a great statesman. He looms before us a mighty figure against the dark background of the nineteenth century, vast, indistinct, yet how affecting in his presence. The world wonders at him, talks about him, reads about him ; yet, after all, how little does the world understand him, the great enigma of his age.

JOHN BRIGHT,
THE SAXON TRIBUNE.

JOHN Bright, the great Saxon orator and
tribune, is dead. Let us call back time
in its flight and placing ourselves in a period
now passed, let us see him as he then appeared.
If you were to pass through the busy town
of Rochdale, which once sent Cobden to
Parliament, ascend the path running past
many factories and many more artisan dwell-
ings, and reach the wild stretch of country
beyond, you might see a large cotton-mill,
from which if it happened to be half-past
twelve o'clock, there would probably be pour-
ing many operatives. If you were to ask these
operatives their opinion of their master, you
would probably receive in words bearing a
strong Lancashire accent this answer :—" He
gives fair value, nothing more and nothing

ess." This has been characteristic of the man in all phases of his career, for the master of the operatives has been more than a mill-owner. Who is he—this man of whom his laborers have been questioned? Withdraw your gaze from the factory with its tall chimney, and let it fall upon the comfortable house of red brick in the immediate neighborhood. Pass in at the open gate; pass by the terraces of flowers; pass over the well-trimmed lawn; pass in at the open door, for it has been said that you will receive no such answer there as "I will see," to the question, "Is the master of the house at home?" If you do not yet know the man, gaze on the wall before you and see the portrait of Richard Cobden; if you are still ignorant, look upon the master himself if he be present: and if you do not recognize, even from his portrait, the clear eye, the earnest look, and, in the whole countenance, that fine and perhaps rare combination of thoughtfulness and fearlessness, shame upon your memory if it has failed you, and if not, pity upon your education, for you look upon the man who is the same to all the world—whether, as an angler,

he casts a fly into a Scottish stream, whether with firm tread he leads a wing of the Liberal Party, or whether he speaks in the British House of Commons as no other man there can speak—for he who is before you is John Bright, the greatest orator within the British Isles.

John Bright was born on the 11th of November, 1811, at Greenbank, near Rochdale. It is said that many German emigrants, passing from Hull to Liverpool on their way to America, when they would hear the railway employees shout "Rochdale," on arriving at the station of that town, would exclaim: "John Bright was born here," and endeavor to survey the native town of the great liberator, whose name had gone through all the earth.

Rochdale is a manufacturing town. Within the borough there are about three hundred factories and machine-works, and these furnish a forest of tall chimneys. Bright's father was a manufacturer who began business in a small way, and increased his business by industry and other sterling qualities. His parentage would in England be termed

humble. We can trace the Bright ancestry back to Abraham Bright, a farmer, who in 1684 resided in the pleasant county of Wiltshire.

Often when a strong man leaps into the broad arena of the earth, the world, cold and doubting, asks "Who were his ancestors?" Many a man has perished beneath the haughty gaze of pride. Many a true poet, hoping to find the summer in the earth, has tried to throw the music of his soul into words, and, with defeat and despair in his broken heart, beneath the world's winter glance of scorn, has crept into obscurity to die. "Hearts once pregnant with celestial fire" have never been brought to the birth. "Hands that the rod of Empire might have swayed" have turned the furrow with the plow or reaped the yellow grain because the world was cold.

No world's frown could wither Bright. No cold reception by the world could check the current of his soul. He was persevering, strong and aggressive. No power in England could keep him down. He went from strength to strength and became a world-thrower. If taunted with his humble

origin, he could return a stinging blow. With withering hiss his sarcasm would scorch every proud one upon whom it fell. When he spake of the gentleman's ancestors who came over with the Conqueror, he added, "I never heard that they did anything else."

If we could hear the roll-call of Britain's glorious dead, to whom she owes her greatness, we would hear the names of many, very many men of humble origin. Robert Burns was an Ayreshire plowman ; Milton a school-master ; glorious Ben Johnson a bricklayer ; Samuel Johnson a bookseller ; Thomas Hood an engraver ; John Bunyan a tinker ; Macaulay the son of a merchant ; David Hume a law-student ; Sir Robert Peel the son of a cotton manufacturer ; George Stephenson a ploughboy ; Charles Dickens a reporter ; Carlyle the son of a mason ; and Isaac Newton was the son of a Lincolnshire farmer. Call the roll of Britain's great dead, and we will learn that they are as the stars, innumerable and indescribably brilliant. We cross the seas by clinging to the stars ; and we pass into the future guided by the beacons of the great dead, who have succeeded where we

would surely fail, were it not for their example.

John Bright was a lofty spirit that rose above party. He was not the minister of a party. He was God's minister. In God's service there is no heritage of rank or title. The true spirit of chivalry in the Master's service is bringing in the nobler modes of life, the sweeter manners and the purer laws. It has been well said that whether the chivalry of feudalism be extinct or not, there can be no question that the villenage of feudalism is gone. Strong men no longer listen to catch the whispers of sovereigns, but, by the will of the people, mould the state's decrees. Royalty has honor, rank has power, and office is a trust. When the man is greater than the rank, and his veins not sluggish with the blue blood of a hundred noble and indolent ancestors,—

“When all the trappings freely swept away
The man's great nature leaps into the day.”

men are not slow to render honor. That is a growing world sentiment which the poet sings :—

“ Believe me noble Vere de Vere,
From yon blue heaven above us bent
The grand old gardener and his wife
Smile at the claims of long descent.

Howe’er it be, it seems to me,
’Tis only noble to be good,
Kind hearts are more than coronets,
And simple faith than Norman blood.”

Jacob Bright, the father of John Bright, was book-keeper for Messrs. John Holme and William Holme. After some time Jacob Bright began a business for himself at Greenbank Mill. The business, small at first, grew to large dimensions. The mill system was then in a primitive condition. The employees were slaves of the employers, and in consequence were gloomy and dissatisfied. Jacob Bright was kind to his employees and in his mill cheerfulness prevented discord.

The parents of John Bright lived happily together. Members of the Society of Friends they worshipped in the little meeting house in Rochdale supported by that sect. Happily as they lived their home was not without sorrow. Sorrow comes to all. Shadows fall upon every

home. The sunniest bank that ever faced the South has had its days of gloom. There fell upon the house a chill when the little boy, the first of the family, died. Before his death a second son was born, who at a later day was known as John Bright, the English orator and statesman.

John Bright owed many of his sterling qualities to his parents. One incident of his childhood indicates their bright example. The little John, in all the pride of a new suit of clothes, was toddling over Cronkeyshaw Common with his mother when they met a poor widow with a ragged boy of about the same stature as John. When the story of privation was heard, John was marched home, and his new suit was transferred to the widow's boy.

While at school he was not precocious in intellect, but always maintained, with apparent ease, a good position in his class. He was independent in nature, and had the pugnacity of the Lancashire character. Unlike many of the prizemen and medallists of the university, who are sometimes not heard of in the world, he did not receive a university education. After leaving school he

devoted his leisure hours to self-culture, and especially to the study of history and poetry. He so prosecuted his studies that when he arrived at middle age, few in England had a wider range of reading or a greater knowledge of English literature. He did not study the ancient orators, neither Demosthenes nor Cicero, but he studied carefully and diligently his mother tongue in such works as those of Milton, Bacon, Shakespeare, Taylor, and most of all the English Bible; and when one heard from the lips of John Bright that rush of simple Saxon words, not guiding him but guided by him, and fraught with some of the happiest quotations ever made, one felt that it was not by the study of the orators of Greece and Rome that a British orator was made, one felt that the orator was born.

Had John Bright attended an English or Scottish university, the road to distinction might have been easier. But the loss might have been greater than the gain. As the column by carving and polishing loses its strength, the orator might have left the university lacking strength and indepen-

dence. He was wonderfully earnest in his oratory. Animated by the feelings he wished to inspire his speech was a brilliant example of the truth that

“Those who would make us feel must feel themselves.”

The traits of the boy were the traits of the man.

“Childhood shows the man
As morning shows the day.”

Independence, earnestness and courage were his. These three at times rose to sublimity. His speech to the masses of England, for years, was as a song of deliverance. His oratory was sublime because sublimity was in his heart. The warmth of his eloquence was as the breath of spring that makes the flowers start with life—as the power of that silent voice Divine that gives to the cold dust of death the throb and thrill of a new life; his wrath, for he was capable of terrible indignation, was like the last storm in winter that makes the strong trees tremble, scatters decayed branches to the earth, and passing away, is followed by the gentler breezes of the summer. Between the enthusiastic warmth of his nature and

the overwhelming righteous indignation of his oratory lay laughter and tears, When the great tribune stood an earnest man before thousands of earnest men he was a veritable giant—a thrower of worlds.

“So many minds did gird their orbs with beams,
Though one did fling the fire,
Heaven flowed upon their souls
In many dreams of high desire.”

In the summer months of 1835 Bright went on a tour to the Holy land. He visited Gibraltar, Malta, and Egypt on the way, and returning by Smyrna, Constantinople, and Egypt passed through Italy, France and Belgium. He told a story on his return which shows that he was not wanting in humor. On the Mediterranean voyage a lady passenger manifested great anxiety for her lap-dog which she nursed with the greatest care and upon which she lavished the most tender affection. One very warm day the passengers were at dinner in the saloon. In order to admit fresh air a window was opened overhead when the favorite lap-dog, which had been basking in the sun on deck, fell with a splash into the soup. The frantic

wails of the heart broken lady mingled with the roars of laughter of the other passengers.

The agitation against the corn laws made Bright famous. The British Parliament had for centuries professedly taken the greatest care of the farmers by giving them legislative protection. Corn was offered at foreign ports for half the price charged in England. The wealthy on the continent would not purchase the merchandise of England because the English would not buy their grain. Provisions on the continent were cheap, the cost of labor on that account less than in England and consequently the continental manufacturers were more prosperous than the British. The distress in England was very great. Misery and all evils that follow in the train of poverty were the result of the corn laws. The death rate was enormous. The chief food of the peasantry of the south of England was black bread made of barley-meal and potatoes. Wages averaged seven shillings per week out of which had to be provided rent, food and clothing.

“ And still the coffins came
With the sorrowful trains and slow,

Coffin after coffin still,
A sad and sickening show."

To overthrow the corn laws and remove the distress, the National Anti-Corn-Law League was founded in Manchester in October, 1838. It is said that the movement was originated by seven men, six Scotchmen and one Irishman,—Edward Baxter of Belfast, W. A. Cunningham, Andrew Dalziel, James Howie, of Edinburgh, James Leslie, Archibald Prentice and Philip Thomson.

A man is moulded by sorrow and joy. Time lays its iron fingers on rock, on tree and man. Sorrow seems to have been the instrument employed by Providence to prepare Bright for his great work. We cannot doubt that the death of his wife in 1841 had a determining influence upon the statesman's career. In a speech delivered sometime afterwards in Rochdale, in reply to an address with which he had been presented, Bright referred to this sad event.

"In the beautiful address there is a reference to services which you are kind enough to say I have rendered in conjunction with the illustrious and lamented Mr. Cobden.

This reminds me of an incident which had something to do with my after career. In the year 1841 I was at Leamington and spent several months there. It was near the middle of September, there fell upon me one of the heaviest blows that can visit any man. I found myself left there with none living of my house but a motherless child. Mr. Cobden called upon me the day after that event, so terrible to me and so prostrating. He said, after some conversation, ‘Don’t allow this grief, great as it is, to weigh you down too much ; there are at this moment in thousands of homes in this country wives and children who are dying of hunger, of hunger made by the law. If you will come along with me, we will never rest until we have got rid of the Corn Law.’ We saw the colossal injustice which cast its shadow over every part of the nation, and we thought we saw the true remedy and the relief, and that if we united our efforts, as you know we did, with the efforts of hundreds and thousands of good men in various parts of the country, we should be able to bring that remedy home, and to afford that relief to the starving people of

the country. I recollect well, in some of our labors, when I looked forward to the day (we could not see it but we knew that it was coming) when that injustice would be removed, and that law-made hunger would be ever afterwards prevented. I recollect often that I took to myself something of prophecy from the lines of one of our poets—when that day shall come, I thought :—

‘ Then shall misery’s sons and daughters
In their lowly dwellings sing ;
Bounteous as the Nile’s dark waters
Undiscovered as their spring,
We will scatter o’er the land
Plenty with a secret hand.’ ”

On another occasion, many years later, in August, 1877, Mr. Bright delivered a speech at Bradford on the life of Cobden and referred to the loss of his wife and the influence it had upon his career. In this speech his pathos was wonderful. He seemed inspired. The audience, reporters and all, were melted into tears. His words were simple and sublime.

“ Well, it was at that time that I was at Leamington, and one day Mr. Cobden called

upon me, for he happened to be there also on a visit to some relatives. I was there in the depth of grief, and I might almost say of despair, for the light and sunshine of my house had been extinguished. All that was left on earth of my young wife, except the memory of a sainted life, and of a too brief happiness, was lying still and cold in the chamber above us. Mr. Cobden called upon me as his friend, and addressed me, as you might suppose, with words of condolence. After a time he looked up and said, 'There are thousands of homes in England at this moment where wives, mothers and children are dying of hunger. Now, when the first paroxysm of your grief is passed, I would advise you to come with me, and we will never rest until the Corn-Law is repealed. I accepted his invitation.'

Thus Cobden and Bright were united in opposition to the Corn Laws. Chiefly by the influence of these two men the principles of Free Trade were firmly established in England. If Cobden had searched Britain from John O'Groats to Land's End he could not have found an abler colleague than John

Bright. What remarkable men! What a marvellous union they made! Bright had not Cobden's ease and persuasiveness of argument; Cobden had not Bright's oratorical powers—he lacked his tones of scorn, humor, pathos and passion.

A constituency in Durham becoming vacant at this time, Bright was nominated for Parliament by the Free Traders. Although he was not elected he polled a very large vote.

His successful opponent was unseated for corrupt practices, and Bright was victorious in the election which followed. Although at this time he was not the strong and graceful orator that he afterwards became, his first speech in the Commons made a fine impression. He spoke not to make himself famous, but to aid the poor. His heart was with the millions in distress. He cared little for name or fame, for his life was consecrated to a noble purpose. The poet voiced the feelings of the young member of Parliament when he sang,

“ Name and fame, to fly sublime

Through the camps, the courts, the schools,

Is to be the ball of time
Bandied in the hands of fools."

When we learn of the distress that was among the poor in England at this time the wonder is not that Bright and Cobden were aroused to action, but that the English people, who love liberty, did not immediately relieve the sufferings of the poor. The poverty increased the emigration. During the year ending January 5th, 1842, 14,000 emigrants left Scotland, 32,428 left Ireland, and 72,104 England, making a total of 118,532. The warehouses of the pawn-brokers were full of goods. The poor rates in Oldham were four times the amount they were in 1839. At Marsden out of 5000 inhabitants 2000 were unemployed. At Accrington, with a population of 10,000, in one week only one beast was killed for food. People were so famished that they ate diseased meat. In 1845, three years later, the distress was greater. In one district of Herefordshire, in June, 200 families destitute and forsaken, without the means of maintaining the decencies of life, were littered like cattle. At Newton there was a

house consisting of two lower and two upper apartments, that was the home of 50 people. When the census was taken the straw was removed that the number of children who slept in it might be known. Water ran into the lower apartments and the people were cold, wet and so demoralized that for months they did not wash themselves. Disease finally carried them off from the earth where

“Man’s inhumanity to man
Makes countless thousands mourn.”

As time passed Bright continued to strengthen his hold upon the people of England, until he was recognized almost everywhere as a great power in public life. At a meeting in Covent Garden Theatre at which Mr. Bright was present, Mr. George Thompson closed an eulogy of Bright with beautiful words of exhortation :—

“Be of courage then. Fling away the trammels of party and expediency. Let principles have their due weight, and consideration, and influence. When the hour of trial comes, be just and fear not. Duty is ours—consequences are God’s. He who follows the dictates of conscience, the laws

of Nature, and the commands of Heaven, may safely leave the rest, and, dying, be satisfied with their verdict—returned by his own mind upon a review of his actions—I saw my duty, and I did it.”

After seven long years of agitation, during which Bright and Cobden travelled over all England, Sir Robert Peel yielded to the pressure of public opinion, and, in 1846, the Corn Laws were abolished. Not only had Bright and Cobden labored in all the cities and towns in England, but they had produced a profound impression on the House of Commons by their presence and their speeches. Little by little the agitation grew. At first public opinion was as a zephyr's breath, but it grew to a hurricane that with resistless power swept over all England. Majorities in both houses of Parliament laughed at the agitation at the beginning; in the end they went down before it as autumn leaves before the blast of coming winter. Money poured in thousands of pounds into the treasury of the Anti-Corn-Law League. Speakers for the agitation multiplied until England was a veritable political

cauldron. Through all the mists of doubt and calumny shone the lion face of Bright, stern at times, and then again bright as the face of a prophet illumined with the inspiration of the prophet's God ; and above all the babble of voices, warring elements, and party cries could be heard his ringing, hopeful voice laden with argument convincing, in the garments of eloquence arrayed, thrilling all who strained to hear his closing words,

“ Men of England ! heirs of glory,
Heroes of unwritten story,
Nurslings of one mighty mother,
Hopes of her, and one another,
Rise like lions from your slumbers,
In unvanquishable numbers ;
Shake your chains to earth like dew,
Which in sleep had fallen on you,
Ye are many—they are few.”

Bright gave his verdict in regard to the power of public opinion, and in so doing described the growth of the agitation which he created and which swept over England. It was in the Free-Trade Hall in Manchester at a meeting in honor of Kossuth the Hungarian, that Bright spoke, “ We are

here to express our admiration for a most distinguished man, one of the most renowned defenders of liberty which our age and the world can boast of. I look upon him on this platform, a wanderer and an exile though he be, as far more illustrious to our eyes, and far more dear to our hearts than any crowned head amongst the monarchs of Continental Europe. But there are men who say: 'Why, what is the use of your sympathy if you have no regiments and no ships.' Well, I shall take another line of argument, and ask you whether there be any force in opinion, in opinion acting upon the nation. Why, let us ask you where you are assembled. Recollect when this hall was built—recollect by whom it was built—recollect that from this platform and this hall went forth the voices which generated opinion in England, which concentrated it, which gathered it little by little, until it became a power before which huge majorities in both houses of Parliament became impotent minorities, and the most august and powerful aristocracy in the world had to succumb."

In 1852, Bright was returned to the Commons for Manchester, and although he had a great reputation, that session was about to begin in which the man would be thoroughly tried. Some of his finest speeches were made against the Crimean war. He believed in defensive warfare, but was opposed to the policy of the war of the Crimea. Although the orator knew that he was speaking in vain, he was, however, in the vigor of his manhood, and his fine physical condition and mental power lent a force to his words which could move, although not convince. Let us imagine the great Saxon tribune, nearly forty years ago, with foot firmly set on the floor of the House, his fine figure leaning forward and his splendid voice sweeping all along the scale (as no other instrument than the human voice can) of whispered pathos, sparkling humor, conscientious anger, and bursts of passion. Coming from such an orator, and falling upon the hearts of such an audience many of whom had relatives at the scene of war, how moving, although not convincing, must have been those words, among which occurs this pass-

age of deepest pathos :—" I do not suppose that your troops are to be beaten in actual conflict with the foe, or that they will be driven into the sea, but I am certain that many homes in England in which there now exists the fond hope that the distant one will return—many such homes may be rendered desolate before the next mail shall arrive. The Angel of Death has been abroad throughout the land—you may almost hear the beating of his wings. There is no one] as when the first-born was slain of old, to sprinkle with blood the lintel and two side-posts of our doors, that he may spare and pass on. He takes his victims from the castle of the noble, the mansion of the wealthy, and the cottage of the poor and lowly, and it is on behalf of all these classes that I make this solemn appeal."

Hearts that were not friendly to the speaker were stirred by this vivid picture—this pathetic appeal. Bright's oratory had improved, and he was a greater speaker than during the Anti-Corn-Law agitation.

Shortly after war was declared he addressed a large meeting in Edinburgh, and in the

speech delivered there upon the war we find this beautiful passage : “ You profess to be a Christian nation. You make it your boast even—though boasting is somewhat out of place in such questions—you make it your boast that you are a Protestant people, and that you draw your rule and doctrine of practice as from a well pure and undefiled, from the living oracles of God, and from the direct revelation of the Omnipotent. You have even conceived the magnificent project of illuminating the whole earth, even to its remotest and darkest recesses, by the dissemination of the volume of the New Testament, in whose every page are written forever the words of peace. Within the limits of this Island alone, on every Sabbath, 20,000, yes, far more than 20,000 temples are thrown open, in which devout men and women assemble that they may worship him who is the Prince of Peace. Is this a reality? or is your christianity a romance? Is your profession a dream? No, I am sure that your christianity is not a romance, and I am equally sure that your profession is not a dream. It is be-

cause I believe this that I appeal to you with confidence, and that I have hope and faith in the future. I believe that we shall see, and at no very distant time, sound economic principles spreading much more widely amongst the people ; a sense of justice grow-up in a soil which hitherto has been deemed unfruitful ; and, what will be better than all—the churches of the United Kingdom—the the churches of Britain awaking as it were, from their slumbers, and girding up their loins in more glorious work, when they shall not only accept and believe in the prophecy, but labor earnestly for its fulfilment, that there shall come a time—a blessed time—a time which shall last forever—when nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more.”

Bright was always in advance of his time. While he was a practical man his eyes were looking away beyond for newer—better things. Perhaps he was right in his opinion of the Crimean war but war seems sometimes unavoidable. War will die with error. If men were wise war would be unnecessary.

“ Were half the power that fills the world with terror,

Were half the wealth bestowed on camps and courts
Given to redeem the human mind from error,
There were no need for arsenals and forts.

Years passed and the Lancashire boy who played in the shadow of his father's mill has become almost an old man. The same courage is his although the voice is not so strong as of old. It is many years since he battled against the Corn Laws and he is now entering upon a campaign for Parliamentary Reform. The character has become richer and nobler in the intervening years and there is an exultant melody about his words that we do not always find in his earlier speeches. He is speaking at Birmingham and there is a power in the words of the Saxon tribune which we can feel now in some degree as they seem to float down to the thousands who listen in Birmingham City Hall. "I say we are great in numbers, and if united we are great in strength; that we are immovable in the solidity of our arguments, and that we are altogether unassailable in the justice of our great cause. Shall we then, I ask you, even for a moment be hopeless of that great cause? I feel almost ashamed to argue it to

such a meeting as this, when I call to mind where I am and who are my hearers. Am I not in the town of Birmingham, England's central capital? and do not these eyes look upon the sons of those who, not thirty years ago, shook the fabric of privilege to its base? The strong men, not a few of the strong men of that time, are now white with age. They approach the confines of their mortal day—its evening is cheered by the remembrance of that great contest; and they behold and they rejoice in the freedom that they have won. Shall their sons be less noble than they? Shall the fire which they kindled be extinguished with you? I see the answer in every face. You resolve that the legacy which they bequeath to you, you will hand down in accumulated wealth of freedom to your children. As for me, my voice is feeble. I feel now sensibly, painfully, that I am not now what I was. I speak with a diminished fire, I act with a lessened force, but as I am, my countrymen and constituents, I will, if you will let me, be found in your ranks in the impending struggle.”

Out of Bright's great characteristics was

his sterling honesty. He seems never to have asked what the people would think of his conduct. He was satisfied if he knew it to be right. He was in no sense a trimmer. The very thought was distasteful to him. He lost his constituency once because he would not indulge, even a little, in setting his sail to catch the passing breeze. He was accustomed to employ apt quotations to illustrate his thoughts. Sometimes he quoted Lowell. He must have seen a reflection of his own life in Lowell's words,—

“Truth forever on the scaffold,
Wrong forever on the throne ;
But that scaffold sways the future,
And behind the dim unknown
Standeth God within the shadow
Keeping watch above his own.”

His views upon the American Civil War did not tend to make him popular. He did not care for that ; his eyes looked right on. He was always in favor of the contention of the North in the war. While we may not agree with him in all his opinions we must admire the eloquence of the man. In the town hall of Birmingham he delivered one of his finest speeches on the American War. It

is said that on this occasion he advanced to the edge of the platform and pointing with his finger over the heads of those before him, as if at the men he was denouncing, he uttered these words,—“ The leaders of this revolt propose this monstrous thing, that over a territory, forty times as large as England, the blight and curse of slavery shall be forever perpetuated. I cannot believe, for my part, that such a fate will befall that fair land stricken though it now is with the ravages of war. I cannot believe that civilization in its journey with the sun will sink into endless night in order to gratify the ambition of the leaders of this revolt, who seek to

‘Wade through slaughter to a throne
And shut the gates of mercy on mankind.’

I have another and a far brighter vision before my gaze. It may be but a vision, but I will cherish it. I see one vast confederation stretching from the frozen north in unbroken line to the glowing south and from the wild billows of the Atlantic to the calmer waters of the Pacific main, and I see one people and one language and one law and one faith, all over that wide continent the home of freedom

and a refuge for the oppressed of every race and every clime."

Great words these, though simple ! When armed with such language and such eloquence, how wonderful is the influence of one mind over a multitude ! We need not wonder that when Bright would sit down in the Commons after a speech, his opponents would sometimes sit helpless, unable to reply. His ridicule was sometimes as potent upon the arguments of the opposite side as the Sultan's horse upon the beauty of nature.

"Byzantines boast that on the clod
Where once their Sultan's horse has trod,
Grows neither grass, nor shrub, nor tree."

Bright was independent in his thought and in his action. He cared little for office ; rather shunned it. Gladstone tells in one of his speeches of his arguing till one o'clock in the morning to convince Bright of his duty to enter the Cabinet. When the question of Home Rule arose, Bright left the party of which he had so long been a member. He was above party and, when he thought that party was wrong, he was determined to follow the course which he believed to be

right. As early as 1872 he made public his opinion in regard to Home Rule for Ireland. In a letter to one of the Home Rule Party he thus expressed himself. "It is said that some persons engaged in the canvass of the County of Kerry have spoken of me as an advocate of what is termed Home Rule in Ireland. I hope no one has ventured to say anything so absurd and untrue. If it has been said by anyone of any authority in the county I shall be glad if you will contradict it. To have two representative legislative assemblies or Parliaments in the United Kingdom would, in my opinion, be an intolerable mischief; and I think no sensible man can wish for two within the limits of the present United Kingdom who does not wish the United Kingdom to become two or more nations, entirely separated from each other. Excuse me for troubling you with this. It is no duty of mine to interfere in your contest, but I do not wish to be misrepresented."

Bright was undoubtedly the greatest English tribune of the century. No man could so sway the masses of the people. When he

had been a member of Birmingham for twenty five years, 20,000 gathered in Bingley Hall to do him honor. When he attained to the age of seventy he received a great ovation from an assembled multitude. When he died in the fulness of years all England wept. While notable personages followed the dead tribune to the grave the coffin was borne by eight of Bright's working men. The mourners gathered about the grave in silent meditation according to the custom of the Quakers, to which sect the great man had belonged. The eulogy pronounced by Gladstone in the House of Commons upon Bright, is perhaps as sublime as anything Gladstone ever uttered. "In intellect he might claim a most distinguished place. But his character lies deeper than intellect, deeper than eloquence, deeper than anything that can be described or that can be seen upon the surface. The supreme eulogy that is his due is that he elevated political life to the highest point, to a loftier standard than it had ever reached before. He has bequeathed to his country a character that cannot only be made a subject for admiration and gratitude—but—and I do

not exaggerate when I say it—that can become an object of reverential contemplation. In the encomiums that come from every quarter there is not a note of dissonance. I do not know any statesman of any time who had the happiness of receiving, on removal from this passing world, the honor of approval at once so enthusiastic, so universal and so unbroken. Yet, none could better dispense with the tributes of the moment, because the triumphs of his life were triumphs recorded in the advance of his country and of its people. His name is indelibly written in the annals of time, and on the hearts of the great and overspreading race to which he belonged, whose wide extension he rejoiced to see, and whose powers and prominence he believed to be full of promise and glory for the best interests of mankind.”

In his speaking in public he was a master of pathos and humor. His power in comic description was remarkable. He could ridicule an opponent's argument and cover all with laughter. He said once in the Commons:—“I recollect a long time ago a gentleman writing about the serious things

which had happened in his time, and he said amongst other things, that there was a man down in the same county—I don't know whether it was Buckinghamshire or where it was—and the man was not a Cabinet minister, he was only a mountebank—but he set up a stall and offered to the country people to sell them pills that were very good against earthquakes."

In referring to Lord Derby's professions about reform he said:—"It would be like the sort of feast that a Spanish host sets before his guests, consisting of little meat and a great deal of table-cloth."

It was Bright who described Disraeli as "the mystery man of the Tory Party," and on another occasion, referring to Disraeli, he said: "If they had been in the wilderness, he would have complained of the Ten Commandments as a harassing piece of legislation."

He was perhaps the finest student of English literature in Britain. His speeches were adorned with quotations from poets famous and obscure. His quotations were apt and frequently of great beauty. He was

delivering an oration upon Cobden at Bradford, when he said :

“ Methinks I hear his voice ! sweet as the breath
Of balmy ground flowers, stealing from a spot
Of sunshine sacred
To everlasting spring.”

In speaking of the Corn Laws of the aristocracy and land owners, he quotes the lines :

“ Not all that heralds rake from confined clay,
Nor florid prose, nor honied lines of rhyme
Can blazon evil deeds, or consecrate a crime.”

In speaking against the system of church rates, he quoted the poet Elliot, in reply to one who had quoted from scripture—“ Render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar’s.”

“ When palaced paupers, sneering, beard the town,
They preach the Church Tax in a text like this—
No text more plain ;—‘ To Caesar give his own !’
Ah, serviles, knavishly the mark they miss,
And give to Caesar *ours*—not *theirs* nor *his*.”

In describing the state of the poor in England, he has many passages from the poets.

“ Bread-taxed weaver, all can see,
What that tax hath done for thee,
And thy children, vilely led,

Singing hymns for shameful bread,
Till the stones of every street
Know their little naked feet."

Perhaps more pathetic are the lines,

"A blessed prospect—
To slave while there is strength—in age the
workhouse,
A parish shell at last, and the little bell
Toll'd hastily for a pauper's funeral."

On another occasion in speaking against
the Corn Laws he closes an enthusiastic and
rousing paragraph with,

"By oppressions's woes and pains
By our sons in servile chains
We will work, while strength remains,
But we shall be free."

Again he quotes from the Biglow Papers

"It is something like a fulfilling the prophecies,
When all the first families have all the best offices."

In urging the people to an attack upon
some grievance, he gathers wisdom from the
"Fairie Queene."

"No fort so fensible, no wall so strong,
But the continual battery may rive."

At another time he rises to a lofty plane—

"Tis time
To snatch their truncheons from the puny hands

Of statesmen, whose infirm and baby minds
Are gratified with mischief, and who spoil,
Because men suffer it, their toy, the world."

In making an estimate of the career of the Saxon tribune it is well to have before us words which he uttered in regard to his purposes in life. "I consider that when I stand upon a platform, as I do now, I am engaged in as solemn a labor as Mr. Dale (a Birmingham minister) when he addresses his congregation," and continuing "It is not only upon the affairs of the other world that men must be true to themselves and to their consciences. The heart itself is often in these matters more at fault than the head; but if people would obey the true impulses of their consciences and their hearts, the progress of nations would be less interrupted than it is now, the misery of populations would be diminished, the unwisdom of our Governments would be checked, and we should find over all the earth a growth and a progress towards that brighter and happier day of which we see now only glimpses and the dawning, but of which more shall be seen by some generations that shall succeed us." In the Commons on

one occasion he spoke of himself and of his aims in life. "I am not, nor did I ever pretend to be a statesman, and that character is so tainted and equivocal in our day that I am not sure that a pure and honorable ambition would aspire to it. I have not enjoyed for thirty years like these noble lords the honors and emoluments of office. I have not set my sail to every passing breeze. I am a plain and simple citizen, sent here by one of the foremost constituencies of the Empire, representing, feebly perhaps, but honestly I dare aver, the opinion of very many, and the true interests of all those who have sent me here." This is eloquent speech, worthy of the great tribune. While we admire the sentiments and the eloquence how great is our admiration of the lofty soul which lay behind all and moved all. Since that October day, now so many years ago, on which the son of the Lancashire trader was born, near the bustling town of Rochdale, with the wild country beyond stretching into Yorkshire, the boy who played, in his childhood, in the shadow of his father's mill, if there has been one true, earnest and great orator,

“ Through all this tract of years.”

that orator is John Bright the Saxon tribune,—

“ A life in civic action warm
A soul on highest mission sent,
A potent voice of Parliament,
A pillar steadfast in the storm.”

The dead poet laureate has given us words which picture the life we have been considering. How true the picture ! In the words of Tennyson we may speak of Bright,—

“ As some divinely gifted man,
Whose life in low estate began
And on a simple village green ;

Who breaks his birth's invidious bar,
And grasps the skirts of happy chance,
And breasts the blows of circumstance,
And grapples with his evil star ;

Who makes by force his merit known
And lives to clutch the golden keys,
To mould a mighty state's decrees,
And shape the whisper of a throne ;

And moving up from high to higher,
Becomes on fortune's crowning slope,
The pillar of a people's hope,
The centre of a world's desire.”

ASHLEY COOPER.

THE history of the Victoria Era cannot be written without an account of the life of Ashley Cooper. His favor with the Queen was so great that he was her recognized adviser in Ecclesiastical affairs. He was called the "Bishop-maker." His tastes were with the aristocracy, but he devoted his life to the service of the poor and the degraded. The white hands of nobility were not to be despised when Ashley Cooper, Earl of Shaftesbury, roused weary sleepers from pallets of decaying straw at the Victoria Arches, under Holborn Hill, to direct them to the Ragged School, and sitting by their side to tell them that "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble." One day he stands in the midst of hundreds of criminals and tells them the old, old story; the next he sways and thrills a vast host in

Exeter Hall, arouses new enthusiasm, awakens zeal, and pleads with men no more by impurity of life to sow the seeds of sin, of discord and of hate among their sons. Operatives cluster in English factories with tall chimnies, Shaftesbury is there. Men thread the darkened labyrinth of the mine, he is there. Hospitals are full of fever patients, he is there. Rows of tenement houses swarm with the poor, he is there. Titled nobility in the House of Lords are unacquainted with the misery of the immediate neighborhood; to draw aside the veil, he is there. Men have shorter hours, better houses, better wages, and better schools because Shaftesbury lived. "His voice was for the right, when freedom's friends were few. He dared to stand alone." He was ever found walking in the shadowy footprints of the Saviour. To remove the heavy burden, to clothe the naked, to feed the hungry, to visit the widow and the fatherless, and them who were in prison, and to let the oppressed go free, his head took counsel from his heart.

We are not hero-worshippers. This man we can respect and admire. What has been

said of Milton may be said of Shaftesbury :
“ But there are a few characters which have stood the closest scrutiny and the severest tests, which have been tried in the furnace and have proved pure, which have been weighed in the balance and have not been found wanting, which have been declared sterling by the general consent of mankind, and which are visibly stamped with the image and superscription of the Most High.” These men we honor, and of these was Shaftesbury.

With the autumn leaves Ashley Cooper died. England wept. Where could the illustrious dead rest but in the silence of the great Abbey, where warrior dust mingles with the dust of statesmen shattered by years of strife in the Great Hall? Where could this missionary rest save in the Great Temple of England's illustrious dead, where king and noble, statesman and poet sleep. William Pitt is there, Chatham is there, Fox, Grattan, Canning and Wilberforce are there. Wilberforce battled with the millions banded to protect the pirates' trade : Ashley Cooper lived to bless the poor. When the bier lay

in Westminster Abbey, artisans, seamstresses, factory-operatives, reclaimed women whose sins once as scarlet were white as snow, once like crimson were as wool, reformed criminals, bootblacks, costermongers, men and women from asylums, refuges, ragged-schools, vied, with royalty, nobility and men renowned in Church, State and literature in honoring the dead missionary. The flowers of a Crown Princess clasped the floral offerings of the London poor, and the tears of Prince and pauper mingled in a common sorrow.

History may say that Chatham "With eagle face and outstretched arm" encouraged England to battle against her enemies. History will say that Ashley Cooper in obeying the great command, "Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature," in causing men to read without disdain and with less sorrow than before the short and simple annals of the poor, gave to all christian hearts a missionary incentive, took from the world in part the tax of sin away and gave himself an everlasting name.

WILLIAM HUME BLAKE.

THE true glory of the Celt in Europe," says James Fergusson, "is his artistic eminence. It is not, perhaps, too much to assert that, without his intervention, we should not have possessed in modern times a church worthy of admiration, or a picture or a statue we could look at without shame."

When the influence of the Celt in Europe has been so great, we need not be surprised that there exists in this modern age a prevailing idea that Ireland is a sort of indigenous home of oratory. For this belief, indeed, there is good foundation. Well may Ireland be proud of her orators; few are the lands that boast such names as Sheil, Curran, Daniel O'Connell, Edmund Burke, and Richard Sheridan.

In oratory, William Hume Blake, who a few years ago was one of our foremost

citizens, disgraced neither the family to which he belonged, nor the country from which, in 1832, he emigrated to Canada. The son of the Rev. D. E. Blake, who belonged to the Blake family of Cashelgrove, Galway, the subject of this sketch claimed as grandfather, on his mother's side, William Hume, of Humewood, Wicklow, who while member of Parliament for the county in which he lived, fell in the Irish Rebellion of 1798, while performing the part of a loyal subject.

Previous to his departure from Ireland, Mr. Blake engaged in the study of surgery, but becoming disgusted with that profession on account of the rude jokes of the dissecting room, entered the Church, in which he remained but a short time before emigrating to Canada.

We can imagine the feelings of Blake on leaving Ireland. Dreams of a settler's life in the Canadian woods floated through his mind. The glory of Canadian sunsets, the grandeur of the scenery, the magnificence of forest, lake and river, and the freedom of a settler's life, formed a prospect far brighter

than any professional career in his native land. He would cross the Atlantic, and with his wife, for he had married his cousin, Catharine Hume, he would found a settler's home, and live a settler's life.

If, as we imagine, these resolves were formed in his mind we shall now see how they were carried out. After residing for a short time in the vicinity of Peterborough, the young couple went farther west, and settled in the township of Adelaide, about twelve miles from the spot where the village of Strathroy now stands. A gallant fight did Hume Blake wage with the trials that came upon him in his life in the woods. To him, as his after life gave proof, Heaven had given a larger share of manly pluck and indomitable perseverance than falls to the lot of most men ; but he soon found that life in the forest is a life of toil, and that his talents were being wasted.

When his son Edward was a year old, Mr. Blake left his forest home, and moved to Toronto, where he studied law. In 1838 he was called to the bar, and began the practice of his profession with such able

competitors as Draper, Baldwin, and John Hillyard Cameron. That any man should rise to distinction in competition with such able men as we have mentioned is a proof of remarkable ability ; that a settler from the forest should, on taking up his residence in the capital of the province, study law, be called to the bar, and almost immediately become the peer of such great rivals, is a matter to excite wonder. We have scarcely cause for wonder, however, when we consider the natural abilities of Mr. Blake. These qualities which go such a long way to constitute the successful orator were his ; a commanding figure, a fine voice, and an impulsive temperament, allied with an energy that was almost irresistible. He seems to have held the same sentiment as Rufus Choate, who used to say "Carry the jury at all hazards ; move heaven and earth to carry the jury, and then fight it out with the judges on the law questions as best you can." Mr. Blake was remarkably successful with a jury. His native eloquence, his masterly grasp of the salient points of a case, and the clear, yet brilliant manner in which he presented his

argument to judge and jury, served to gain for him not only a lucrative practice, but also a great reputation as a distinguished lawyer.

Mr. Blake, however, was to be something more than a lawyer; however much he loved his profession, and desired to continue in its practice, when his adopted country called him to other labor, he felt that it was his duty to obey. Like other able men, who have desired to lead a purely professional life in a new and thinly settled country, he found that men able to govern the land wisely were not so numerous, but that he also was demanded. While fond of his profession, he saw that his country had stronger claims upon him, and found how much truth is embodied in the words of the great poet :—

“ There’s a divinity that shapes our ends,
Rough-hew them how we will.”

Scarcely had William Hume Blake entered political life when he distinguished himself by the liberality and purity of his principles and the fearless manner in which he declared them. Mr. Blake displayed such great ability in dealing with the political questions of the

day, that he soon rose to a high position in the party to which he belonged.

In the early history of a nation such as ours, not forced into existence by the volcanic throe of some great revolution such as gave birth to the United States of America, but growing gradually into a nation, as the brooklet widens and deepens into the majestic river, it is seldom that we find an orator and statesman presenting his views to the people in such a forcible and eloquent manner as Mr. Blake in the speech from which the following extract is taken : “ The hand of tyranny may rudely sever the bond which unites the land of my adoption to the empire ; it can have no power to rob me of those political feelings towards Britain, my country, over which I fondly hope that the grave itself shall have no control. But shall I permit those sacred professions to be profaned by being used as arguments to induce me to surrender my essential rights as a free man ? England cannot wish, and certainly she has no right, to preserve the integrity of the Empire by such a sacrifice. And I hesitate not to declare that, much as I glory in the

power of Britain—much as I admire her unparalleled greatness—I would rather see them mouldering in the dust than supported by an infringement of those constitutional principles of liberty upon which they were founded, and with which I even dare to hope that they will fall.”

These are manly words ; this is eloquent speech. No wonder that such sentiments so boldly declared, produced a profound effect at the time of their delivery. Where is the truly great orator, who in some moment of deepest inspiration has not portrayed his character in his words ? He may not have intended to do so ; he may have been carried away for the moment by his feelings ; but as the tide of inspiration swept over him he presented his character in a truer light than he could have done in a calmer moment ; he did it involuntarily and perhaps on this account the picture is the more perfect. If in this passage we see clearly the character of William Hume Blake (and who doubts that we do ?) his character was one that any man might be proud to possess—a character that is described in the words of the poet,—

“ Strong sense, deep feeling, passions strong,
A hate of tyrant and of knave,
A love of right, a scorn of wrong,
Of coward and of slave.”

When the administration of Baldwin and Lafontaine began, Mr. Blake became Solicitor General. Soon after this event he addressed himself to the reform of the Chancery Court of Upper Canada ; and when the Chancellorship was formed no one was considered so capable of filling that important office as William Hume Blake.

Mr. Blake has completed his noble career upon this earth ; but his memory is still fresh in the hearts of the people. He has left behind him children who are bearing new honors to their family name, and we can conclude in no better way than by giving that warm tribute to the memory of the father by his illustrious son, the Hon. Edward Blake. “ The reputation of William Hume Blake is not my individual inheritance ; its defence should not be my especial care. It is the common property of his fellow countrymen, and they should prize it highly and guard it well. I know past all doubting,

that to them I may confidently commit the vindication of him whose memory I hold dearest upon earth ; and whose bright example, active, fervent devotion to the cause of freedom, truth and justice ; whose indomitable perseverance in the thorny path of duty it has been my earnest aim to follow, with steps, however unequal, and at a distance, however great."

EGERTON RYERSON.

WE may admire a great tree as we gaze from massive bole to branches which seem to rake the passing clouds, but we form a correct idea of the giant of the forest only, when we walk from end to end as it lies before us, felled by the winter's blast. So it is with a great man ; we may honor and admire him while he lives, but it is only when he is dead, when in reading his history we can set our finger down and say, in that year was he born and in this year did he die, that we can fully comprehend what a loss the world has sustained.

As one by one the links that bind the Present to the Past are broken, as one by one the grand old pioneers of our country go down to their graves, the first thought that arises within us is, nobly have they lived, nobly have they died, let them rest in peace.

When we consider, however, the noble lives that our fathers lived, when we consider how they fought, it may not have been with gleaming bayonet and shotted gun, but nevertheless, fought for their country since they lived good, noble and energetic lives, there comes a second and a better thought which is expressed in the words of the poet better than in any of ours,—

“ On such a theme
'Tis impious to be calm.”

It is the life of one of the most illustrious of these pioneers that we are about briefly to consider. At the close of the last century Colonel Joseph Ryerson, a United Empire Loyalist, settled in the County of Norfolk, in the London district. On the 24th of March, 1803, Joseph Ryerson's fourth son was born, who received the name of Adolphus Egerton Ryerson. Norfolk was then newly settled, and its educational advantages were very limited, nevertheless, Egerton Ryerson must have made the best of them if we are to judge from the eminence to which he attained in after-life. It is but natural that the gallant old Colonel, who stood up for church

and state, should have been grieved when he saw his sons going from the Episcopalian to the Methodist church ; and when Egerton Ryerson was about to follow the example of his brothers he had to make a choice between his home and Methodism. By the choice he then made we see that he possessed in his youth that decision of character which was such a marked trait of his after-life. It was a great trial. Would he follow where he thought his duty led, would he obey his earthly or his Heavenly Father ? His after-life gives the answer, he was true to his God. During the two following years he acted as usher in the London District Grammar School ; and at the end of that time his father had found that a servant is not as faithful as a son, and Egerton was called home. Farming, however, was not the profession which he was destined to follow, for at the age of twenty-two he was called to the work of the ministry and soon became known as an eloquent preacher. It was not by his voice alone, however, that he was destined to become famous, for the Methodists soon saw that they had in the opponent of Bishop

Strachan a defender who possessed a mind of no common mould. Mr. Ryerson became joint editor of the *Christian Guardian* in 1829, and altogether he conducted this paper for about nine years. Thrice did he serve the ecclesiastical body, to which he belonged, in England, the second time having been sent there to obtain a royal charter for the institution which is now known as Victoria University. The Upper Canada Academy was incorporated as a university in 1841, and Dr. Ryerson became its first President, filling the office for about two years.

In 1844 Dr. Ryerson was appointed Government Superintendent of schools in Upper Canada. He now entered upon the great work of his life, and labored in behalf of popular education for thirty-two years. If the people of Ontario have any one in particular to thank for the efficiency of their public school system, in all probability that man is Dr. Ryerson.

His was a many sided career. Not only did he serve his country and the Methodist body, but he figured prominently in many of the great political struggles which occurred

in Canada. We might speak of the prominent part he took at the time of the rebellion in 1837; we might tell how he materially aided Lord Durham in sending forth his report; we might describe the position he maintained in the stirring times of Baldwin and Lafontaine; but in doing so we would only be going over ground already travelled; suffice it to say that his life is a proof of that fact, which so many of our public men are so slow in comprehending, that in order to be a great politician, and as such to serve one's country, it is not necessary to sit in legislative halls.

In 1880 there appeared in two volumes "The Loyalists of America and their Times," by Dr. Ryerson. What a happy task must that have been to tell the story of his father and his father's associates, and to weave into a history that mass of anecdote and description of historical events, many of which he must have heard fall from his father's lips and which must have hovered in his mind through the great part of his stirring career.

He is gone, and it is ours to remember, ours to mourn his loss; and ours to imitate

his example. The Future flows in upon us as a tide—a tide that can never more return, but must sweep on through Present into Past—a tide on which are borne the lives of men. As we see those full, well rounded lives, which were cradled by Canada or in the Old Countries, swept away, we think will their places ever be filled, who will succeed them. We can only hope, with some it may be a wavering hope, which, however, receives new strength when there comes the thought,

“Can not the self same mould
Bring back the self same men?”

In Dr. Ryerson there passed away a man to whom we may apply what has been said of Sir Walter Scott, “Take him all in all it may be long before the world will see his like again.” Perhaps we give a true description of Dr. Ryerson when we say he was a man

Who “kept his honesty and truth,
His independent tongue and pen;
And moved in manhood as in youth,
Pride of his fellowmen.”

DANIEL WEBSTER.

IN 1812, the war in which Canadian volunteers won renown at Queenston Heights and Lundy's Lane was declared against Great Britain by the Madison Congress of the United States. Shortly after the declaration of war a general election was held in the United States, and during the campaign many public meetings were conducted throughout the country, for the discussion of the public questions of the day. At a certain town in the northern part of New England, a meeting was announced for a particular night. All through the day the pulse of the town beat rapidly, for the public were excited with the expectation of hearing a distinguished and popular orator. To many a zealous local politician the hours seemed slow in passing away. As the afternoon passed the excitement increased. While

several were to speak at the meeting, the expectation of the public was kindled in regard to the hearing of one particular man. At early dusk the public hall, in which the meeting was to be held, was filled to overflowing, and shortly afterwards the loud cheering without announced the arrival of the rising politician of that northern state. Several leading citizens addressed the meeting; one by one they rose and made good speeches, and one by one they retired without satisfying the multitude. It was said by one who was present that the expectations of the audience would not have been met had Chatham or the Apostle Paul been there.

The admired orator in due time arose, and after the series of cheers which drowned his first words had died away, proceeded to state his opinions clearly and plainly, without manifesting any of the characteristics of the demagogue. The audience was still, save that now and then a wave of delight, followed by a slight murmur, swept over the multitude of upturned faces. Now and then there were indications that applause was about to break forth, but the people were

restrained by those who generally led on such occasions, and who were now intent upon hearing every word. At last the speech was completed, and the orator, for the lack of cheers by the way, was well repaid by the thunders of applause at the close.

Who is the man who is thus able to make a deep impression upon the citizens of an important state? Has he grown gray in political warfare? He has never been returned to Parliament. Is he old in the study of public address? He is not more than thirty years of age. Has he been cradled by wealth and dandled into prominence? He is the son of a revolutionary veteran, whose cabin was reared amid the snowdrifts of New Hampshire. It is he who became a leading statesman of his country, and one of the greatest orators of the world. It is Daniel Webster, afterwards known as the farmer of Marshfield, addressing the electors of his native state.

Before considering the work of an illustrious man, we have a natural desire to know something of his early life. This rule applies particularly to men who have figured largely

in public affairs, and not with equal force to men of literary habits, especially many of the poets, who, in their early work in particular, seem to instinctively speak of the associations of youth. When we read in Tennyson's early work of creeping mosses, willow-branches, souging reeds, desolate creeks, silvery marish-flowers, wavy swells, and clambering weeds, it is hardly necessary to tell us that it was in the fen-country that the poet spent his early days.

It sometimes happens that the public man as well as the poet tells us of his early days, but his reason for so doing is different from that of the poet. The statesman reviews his career in justification of himself or his party. It was while defending General Harrison from the sneer of being a log-cabin candidate that Daniel Webster gave us that picture of his father's home, that speaks to us with an eloquence possessed alone by the painter in words:—"It is only shallow-minded pretenders who either make distinguished origin matter of personal merit, or obscure origin matter of personal reproach. Taunt and scoffing at the humble condition

of early life affect nobody in this country but those who are foolish enough to indulge in them ; and they are generally sufficiently punished by public rebuke. A man who is not ashamed of himself, need not be ashamed of his early condition. It did not happen to me to be born in a log cabin, but my elder brothers and sisters were born in a log cabin, raised amid the snow-drifts of New Hampshire, at a period so early, as that when the smoke first rose from the rude chimney, and curled over the frozen hills, there was no similar evidence of a white man's habitation between it and the settlements on the rivers of Canada."

When a man becomes famous his biographers are usually provided with a number of anecdotes relating to his early life. To this rule Webster is no exception and many wonderful tales supposed to be indicative of his genius have been given to the world. Whether these anecdotes are true or false it may be difficult to determine but it seems to be verified that having begun life on the frontier and, with the assistance of his father, having striven to obtain an education he

terminated the struggle and gained the victory when he graduated at Dartmouth College ; and after the closing exercises and in the presence of his class-mates tore into many pieces his diploma of Bachelor of Arts, exclaiming that his industry might make him a great man but the miserable parchment never.

Webster is said to have been as quick at repartee in his youth as when in middle age he was recognized as one of the greatest of debaters. It is related that he and his brother having retired to bed became engaged in a discussion in the course of which a scuffle over the possession of a school-book occurred. During the disturbance the bed-clothes were ignited but were fortunately saved from any extensive injury. On being questioned in the morning as to the origin of the fire Daniel replied that they had been in search of light and had only found more than they wanted.

Thus far Webster's efforts had been crowned with success. He had left the wild New Hampshire farm, and having manfully fought his way had obtained an education

which would be of service to him in days to come. As he reviewed his life, brief though it had been, he might apply to himself the substance of the words which were uttered a few years later by the genius of another land.

“Who breaks his birth’s invidious bar,
And grasps the skirts of happy chance,
And breasts the blows of circumstance
And grapples with his evil star.”

Induced possibly by his powers of oratory, Webster undertook the study of law. At that time the profession of law afforded greater opportunity for eloquence than in our day. In due time he was called to the bar, where he achieved great success. Native ability, aptitude for public speaking, and tireless application carried all before him. Perhaps his finest effort as a pleader was made in the defence of Dartmouth College, against the State Legislature. On this occasion, Webster is said to have had the case so at his command, that scarcely looking at his brief, he went on, hour after hour, with a flood of words, simple and strong, that seemed to bear his audience irresistibly along, more by reason than eloquence. Although

at times his eyes flashed fire, and his voice rang with defiance, there was no straining after rhetorical effect. The famous Judge Story, who had prepared himself, pen in hand, to take notes, sat hour after hour, the pen appearing never to approach the paper, for as Story afterwards said, everything was so clear and so easy to remember that not a note seemed necessary. Often did Story speak of the effect produced upon the Court by that argument. "For the first hour," said he, "we listened to him with perfect astonishment, for the second hour with perfect delight, and for the third hour with perfect conviction."

Such was the eloquence of Daniel Webster. Simple, clear, strong and conclusive. There was no striving after figures of speech, no gaudy display of rhetoric; but every word had its effect, and every sentence carried its burden of conviction to the hearts of his hearers. Fortunately Webster has expressed his conception of oratory, and in doing so has illustrated and defined his own powers of speech. "True eloquence, indeed, does not consist in speech. It

cannot be brought from far. Labor and learning may toil for it, but they will toil in vain. Words and phrases may be marshalled in every way, but they cannot compass it. It must exist in the man, in the subject and in the occasion. Affected passion, intense expression, the pomp of declamation, all may aspire after it, but they cannot reach it. It comes, if it come at all, like the outbreking of a fountain from the earth, or the bursting forth of volcanic fires, with spontaneous, original, native force. The graces taught in the schools, the costly ornaments and studied contrivances of speech shock and disgust men, when their own lives, and the fate of their wives, their children and their country hang on the decision of the hour: then words have lost their power, and rhetoric is vain, and all elaborate oratory contemptible. Even genius itself then feels rebuked and subdued, as in the presence of higher qualities. Then patriotism is eloquent, then self-devotion is eloquent. The clear conception, outrunning the deductions of logic, the high purpose, the firm resolve, the dauntless spirit, speaking on the tongue, beaming from

the eye, informing every feature, and urging the whole man onward, right onward to his object—this, this is eloquence ; or rather it is something greater and higher than all eloquence : it is action, noble, sublime, god-like action ! ”

Such was the eloquence of Webster when he made the finest effort of his life and swept the arguments for secession before him as autumn leaves before the stormy blast. A debate was in progress in the Senate in regard to the sale of public lands. To such a height did feeling rise that South Carolina, with other states ready to follow, threatened secession. Mr. Hayne, an orator of great ability, was the champion of the South. As a speaker he was rapid and fiery, and could occasionally utter a sentence that would strike sharply and with great effect. Webster having spoken on the subject of debate, and finding it necessary to attend the Supreme Court, in which he had a case to argue, a friend moved a postponement of the debate, but Hayne objected, declaring that Webster had discharged his fire in the presence of the Senate, and he hoped he would

now afford him an opportunity of returning the shot. Webster replied from his seat :—
“ Let the discussion proceed, I am ready now to receive the gentleman’s fire.” On the following day Webster made his reply. That day has been called the day of days in the Senate of the United States. Daniel Webster had made many great efforts, both at the bar and in the Senate, but not until that day had he displayed his full strength. Not until that day did even his friends know how deep, strong and resistless was his eloquence.

For days people had been crowding into the city to hear the great oratorical contest. As early as nine o’clock in the morning, crowds gathered in the Capitol, and by twelve, the appointed hour for the debate to be continued, the hall was crowded, and the stairways jammed with men. At last Webster arose, and after a brief introduction, sufficient to attract the attention of all present asked for the reading of the resolution. While the resolution was being read, many seized the opportunity to view the man who was about to speak. There he stood, rather

above the medium height, well formed, erect. His head was large, his countenance denoted strength of will; and as he waited for the voice of the Secretary to cease, and felt that in the effort he was about to make he would succeed, the fire of exultation at times sparkled in his eyes. The Secretary concluded the reading of the resolution, the debater began, and throughout the hall a deep mysterious silence grew. As the fine sentences of that speech which men delight to read to-day rolled forth, thought succeeded thought with cumulative power, friends feared that he would fail. It seemed to many that no intellect could maintain such a lofty flight. When he described the sufferings of New England in her early days, strong men wept like children. The argument for secession was swept away. As he delivered the peroration, closing with those glorious and oft repeated words—"Liberty and Union now and forever, one and inseparable"—men gazed at his face glowing as with the light of inspiration.

Thus Daniel Webster made his greatest effort. Long after his death, although the

war was not averted, the effect of the speech was felt throughout the whole country, and its influence was perceptible upon the public life of the nation. After this memorable occasion, the career of Daniel Webster was long and brilliant, but as an orator he reached the zenith of his career when he replied to Hayne.

It remains to tell how Webster died. It was the old, old story—a statesman's life suddenly cut off in the midst of his labors. Quickly the news spread over the country that Daniel Webster was ill at Marshfield. One by one the long days went wearily by—days which by their sadness recalled the memory of other happier days, in which he had strolled through the meadows of his farm, or, looking seaward, over the wild stretch of waters, repeated with deep voice and genuine feeling, words glorious as those of Byron, which he once uttered on such an occasion in the presence of Edward Everett.

“ There is a pleasure in the pathless woods,
There is a rapture on the lonely shore,
There is society where none intrudes,
By the deep Sea, and music in its roar ;

I love not man the less, but Nature more,
From these, our interviews, in which I steal
From all I may be, or have been before,
To mingle with the universe, and feel
What I can ne'er express, yet cannot all conceal."

One by one the days went by. His favorite oxen were driven towards his window, that the dying man might once more look into the loving eyes of his poor dumb friends. At last the day came on the morning of which with prophetic instinct he exclaimed: "I shall die to-night!" Before the next day dawned, in the midst of his family, in his old home of Marshfield by the sea, with the ocean roaring up the beach, and with dying lips slowly breathing those words, "I still live," more glorious in their meaning than he dreamed, the great soul passed away.

